

Full Governors Meeting

18th March 2026 via TEAMS

Item and Description	Notes
<p>1. Welcome, apologies and quorum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Introductions and welcome b. Confirm membership of the Full Academy Board c. Receive and agree whether to accept apologies d. Confirm whether the meeting is quorate e. Confirm resignations or term of office end f. Consider and ratify other changes g. Declaration of Interests and/or Conflict of Interests 	<p>Attendees: Peter Croft, David Marchant, Sarah McGrath, Owen Price-Jones, Chris Pyle, Maggie Robson.</p> <p>Additional attendees for certain sections of the meeting: Lauren Booker Sarah Nohavicka.</p> <p>Apologies: None.</p> <p>Quorate: Yes.</p> <p>MR - NR's term of office has now ended and he was an elected parent governor.</p> <p>DSM – I have spoken with NR today and I also spoken to the trust after a conversation with MR about governor recruitment and the balance of parent governors etc. We have to go out with an election for a parent governor and now would be a good time to recruit two additional parent governors to bolster our numbers to three parent governors with SM. SM are you happy to keep going longer with your term of office?</p> <p>SM – I was going to raise, if it would be better for me to step down and allow another parent in? It feels a little strange for me to be a parent governor now as my youngest is about to go to university.</p> <p>DSM – This is entirely your choice. One of the things we have just done is the skills audit which has been really helpful and shown us we are all covered. For the election it would be good to see what skillsets come through and how well individuals are voted for. At that point you may decide to step back but I don't know if you can hang on to that point? We can speak outside of this as well SM. We really value your input particularly from the sector as well.</p> <p>SM – Yes absolutely, it is not about wanting to step down, I am just conscious I don't have a child at school now.</p> <p><i>All agreed to go ahead with the election.</i></p> <p>Declarations/conflicts of interest: No.</p>
<p>2. Approve – Previous Minutes</p>	<p><i>Minutes approved for 4th February, BJ to ensure this document is published on the school website.</i></p>
<p>3. Matters Arising</p>	<p>MR – We looked at pupil premium last time but decided it needed a bit of work, you said it would be presented at the next meeting is that still in progress as it is not on the agenda?</p> <p>DSM – Yes, it is still in progress. Following the last meeting we met as a senior team and went through the new Ofsted toolkit looking at where we stand e.g expected or stronger – we think we may be at the expected standard but need to find more robust evidence. The one bit that I have highlighted as a risk in terms of the PP strategy is due to the basis that it is in development but we are really keen and PRC is leading on this. We don't</p>

	<p>want to knee-jerk and tick a box but look at the needs. We have gone through and analysed all the data in terms of progress, attendance and SEND overlap with our PP students, to try and identify what trends there were. Actually, there are not very many trends, which is really good in one sense because it means we can take a bespoke approach but we need the data and evidence to justify this. There isn't anything specific leading us to a whole school approach essentially.</p> <p>PRC – Where you have under performance it is because of small numbers / micro-clusters of one or two children with very bespoke needs. This is why we want to do something bespoke rather than a bland generic approach. Some PP strategies out there are similar, woolly and don't necessarily target what we want to target for our young people.</p> <p>DSM – With the new toolkit as well, it is important, as there are no specific trends, how we articulate things with the data we have and therefore demonstrate impact is going to be much more challenging given us wanting to take a bespoke approach. This is the stage of planning we are at but I am expecting PRC to share a draft at the next meeting so that it is there and fully in place for the new academic year.</p> <p>PRC – Part of this is getting pupil and parent voices on this as well, to try and really hone in on the challenges we have. Some of the challenge is our geography and how we really get to grips with this as well.</p> <p>MR – Excellent, thank you.</p>
<p>4. Personal Development Proposal</p>	<p><i>DSM handed over to SN (Assistant Headteacher) and LB (Head of RE).</i></p> <p>SN – In a nutshell, we would stop delivering Personal Development as a stand-alone lesson on a Friday morning and incorporate this within the RE curriculum, which we can do due to the changes we are making to the KS4 offer (offering citizenship rather than compulsory RE). PD currently ticks all the boxes with students getting all the information they need but we would much rather deliver this content as part of the RE curriculum with staff who are particularly well trained at managing discussion and complex topics. This is also strongly backed by staff feedback. This also supports better Quality Assurance and develops expertise with the level of complexities involved/ that this subject needs. The document circulated in this group maps all of this out and explains how we can do this alongside timescales. If governors agree LB and I would spend a lot of the summer-term making sure this works really well.</p> <p>LB – I have experience of delivering a curriculum like this in my previous school where we had PSHE citizenship and RE embedded into one subject area. I found it worked really efficiently as you are able to develop some of the writing skills which can be transferable across all three subject areas. It also means it becomes more rigorous</p>

because we have the opportunity to access the knowledge and understanding in a really practical way – with writing or speaking and listening activities. This would provide lots of opportunities for enrichment and developing key skills which are transferable across the curriculum as well. All in all, the model works successfully and for students there is always something different for them to be engaged with. There is a higher variety of different subject areas and it presents PSHE as a more academic subject as well – they don't know you are shifting between citizenship, RE and PSHE, instead they see this as a linear subject, which provides the opportunity to embed more of the quality we would want and then upskill students. This is vital.

SM – To me it seems sensible and I think it will get more engagement. A great idea. Also, I would like to suggest Pol-Ed resources, you may already use this. Yes, you do, great.

DSM – We also use it a lot for interventions with children who are coming back from reintegrations/suspensions etc.

MR – I think it is a great proposal. This is an area that always creates problems and the fact that LB has experience of this working before is a great basis. Have you got enough RE staff?

LB – Yes, we have three RE staff and one is part-time. We are hoping with the changes to the KS4 curriculum that this will give us more time across KS3. When we model the curriculum, the hope is that it will be retained within subject specialists. If not, we also have the opportunity with extra hours to provide bespoke CPD to those staff who may be drawn into teaching the subject (to support upskilling and facing new challenges they may come across). I am confident we will be able to deliver this to a really high standard.

DSM – With the current curriculum model, RE does have a shortfall of hours with the way we have changed KS4. It will obviously grow in the following year because of the five periods over the fortnight rather than three. We have an overstaffing in areas like Geography but they have a lot of experience of delivering similar elements of curriculum. As LB says it will be a smaller pool of staff that have already been sounded out a little bit and have the confidence to teach certain elements of this curriculum.

OPJ – I really like the idea generally. I think going back to having this being taught by people who are experienced leading these discussions is probably for the best and I am pleased about this. My only question is on the document about staff wellbeing, there is a mention of reduction in directed time then in brackets six hours and I have no idea how/where you have got this from? It's 25 minutes every week, 38 weeks, which is 15 + hours.

PRC – It is a bit different with break/lunch times and reverting back to a normal Friday timetable. Staff have two breaks which is directed time and paid for but not lunch

time. So when you model it back the numbers are correct. This is a bonus for staff wellbeing, when speaking to colleagues, Friday is the end of the week, it is a longer day (depending on your timetable and PPA) – personally I think this will give a little bit back.

CP – Echoing things people have already said. It looks very sensible. We have heard in these meetings before that the current model has been unpopular with some staff. Two questions from me:

- 1) Tell us about the novel based bit?
- 2) I understand the KS3 part is as it is. For KS4 is that a work in progress as the option structure changes? For year 11 it says the current year depends on whether or not they keep RE GCSE. Will that phase through into something different?

SN – I should have changed that, in discussion with David, the dream is that we deliver the PSHE curriculum through a young adult fiction novel. Realistically that is not going to be in the plan for next year but the one after – our ambition. Partly because the idea comes from Sale Grammar who were our school improvement partner and that's how they deliver it. With my other literacy hat on, to achieve another aim, which is getting students at least reading a little bit more. It would enable us to deal with some of the topics that come up with more open discussion rather than here are the dangers of this. Realistically our ambition for next year would be to teach at least some of the content through a novel, which then parents could also read hopefully discuss with them.

CP – It is a really nice thing to do, I love it.

SN – Delivery at KS4 – The current year 10 who will go into year 11, we know have covered all of the necessary content to meet the requirements, with the exception of the specialist RSE topics that they would have on sexual assault and the law relating to that. We can embed that into the core RE topics that they will do, which we are planning to be religion and family in that topic, which we can incorporate it all into. So, the new year 11 as of September, will still have had access to all of the content.

CP – That is really helpful, thank you.

DSM – The approach for KS5 is a little bit more bespoke, in the sense that it is talking about using engagement with external partners as much as using the form tutor approach etc. I want to draw governor's attention to the last Ofsted – at the time, feedback we were given was around PD/ PSHE programme, which is why I've been reticent to move away from the current model. But what really compelled me is Sarah and Lauren's presentation of a coherent five and seven-year programme that maps and takes children through a key programme of study and is integrated to the curriculum. The idea that actually we do healthy eating in our food curriculum really, really well. So why would we then follow up with doing that less well with people who aren't as expert in that? And so mapping those real specialist elements out.

The elephant in the room in some respects, on the basis that we move to this model next year, we have current year nines going into year 10 picking up global studies next year which means they are doing a citizenship GCSE and not automatically the RE GCSE though they have the option to do GCSE RE. This then leaves the current year 10 going into year 11 being the legacy of doing RE GCSE on a compulsory basis, which is the 11 GCSEs. From a data point of view this didn't make a difference last year but one of the emerging trends this academic year we saw 10 -15 children exercise the right to withdraw from GCSE RE, which is causing a degree of logistical challenge.

This is a transitional year and a transitional model, the proposal I'm making is that as we get to July, i.e. close to the end of this academic year, we give children and parents the choice of whether they want to continue to do the full GCSE and RE or whether they do a combined statutory RE and some PD / as we get nearer to exams more revision work in those lessons as part of a transitional model. It does have a structural impact on the timetable, but it's one we believe we can manage. That's the proposal and my hunch is we'll have about two classes of children go through to sit the GCSE in RE and probably about four classes who will step away from that and take the statutory approach. That's my best guess at what it will mean in real terms.

SM – Sorry I missed the timescale there to change it?

DSM – As late in this academic year as possible, with a view of the classes being changed for September.

SM – Why is it as late as possible in the year?

DSM - At the moment, English and RE staffing is tied together. So RE lessons are not taught all at the same time, which means we can't enact the change until September when we're on the new curriculum model. So if we now start telling children that they have a choice, what will happen is we'll be teaching mixed classes of children who are working towards a GCSE and children who have effectively opted out.

SM – So current year 10? Apologies I thought we were talking about year 11.

DSM – Current 10s yes. Year 11s will continue as they are. No doubt between the next couple of months, we'll have a couple more exercise their right to withdraw, which is beyond my control. The beauty of the new global studies model, in addition to meeting the request of a number of parties of reducing the number of GCSEs, is they can't exercise a legal right to withdraw from citizenship education - only the statutory RE element.

MR – Good.

DSM – Is everyone happy with all elements of the proposal?

	<p>MR - I think it seems to have all round approval. Yes, it sounds really, really exciting, actually.</p> <p><i>All in agreeance.</i></p> <p>DSM – A massive thank you on the record while they're here to Sarah and Lauren who've put the legwork into putting that proposal together and arm twisting me into something that I was quite reluctant to consider this academic year. But I am really genuinely excited about it as well, so thank you both.</p> <p>MR – Thank you.</p> <p><i>NOTE: SN and LB left the meeting.</i></p>
<p>5. Policy Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECT 	<p>'QEGS ECT Policy'</p> <p>OPJ - I thought the policy read absolutely fine. It's just on the very last page, it says role of the board of trustees. And I assume that's meant to say governors as it talks about the things the school will do.</p> <p>DSM – I will clarify, I think you are correct.</p> <p>SM – Is this a local policy for QEGS or across the trust?</p> <p>DSM – A local policy for QEGS.</p> <p>Just so you're aware, because QEGS is now the host school of One Cumbria teaching school, we are not allowed to, (although we have ECTs), all of their quality assurance is not done through One Cumbria, it's done through an organisation called Red Kite. Red Kite obviously have to use a different provider as well. So it's one of the regulations. So it may well be that there is a trust policy that exists but that QEGS needs its own separate one because the process sits separate to One Cumbria.</p> <p><i>All approved subject to getting clarity on governors and trustees. Once confirmed by DSM, BJ to publish on the school website.</i></p>
<p>6. SDP Update</p>	<p><i>'ADP 2025 2026 – Final March Update' shared with all governors in advance.</i></p> <p><i>Item 1 was finance.</i></p> <p>DSM explained that due to inaccurate budget setting by the trust Finance Director, the school had swung into a projected deficit for this academic year.</p> <p><i>MR raised concerns around what is happening in the trust and articulated very well what others were feeling after everything we were promised. The group shared their concerns at a trust level and generally around the sector.</i></p>

	<p>MR suggested writing a letter to the trust board as DSM confirmed he couldn't give governors the answers they should have and highlighted that the only people that could do this would be the trustees.</p> <p>Concerns were also shared about the DFE forcing QEGS to join a MAT and now QEGS is not receiving the support it was promised – especially around finance.</p> <p>DSM – Finance - We are being told at the moment what numbers we need to hit effectively but we don't have the reasons why or awareness of the length of time to put things in place. The uncertainty is unsettling.</p> <p>PRC – Last year, academically on attainment, we were through the top 200 schools nationally - We are a flagship school. Our three most successful departments historically are the three areas we can't recruit for next year.</p> <p>DSM – QEGS are fighting those fights amongst others.</p> <p>MR – I have been invited to the next chairs meeting on Tuesday.</p> <p>CP – It sounds incredibly challenging. MR, whatever the outcome of the chairs meeting, I think it's really important that you escalate it formally in whatever way (obviously that's the central team). I presume the regional director will be very interested in all of this. Who knows/ what is the level of staff awareness? Do you think it is feasible to achieve those savings without going through a redundancy process? Are the SLT ok, there is obviously significant frustration and concern?</p>
<p>7. Data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Predications for Tests / Exams • Attendance • Exclusions / Suspensions 	<p><i>PRC presented the following information on screen:</i></p> <p>1. Attendance data from FFT was shared which showed our school vs FFT national data vs the FFT contextualised attendance estimate for schools such as ourselves/cohort.</p> <p>PRC - Week 13-16 saw a lot of illness but otherwise QEGS have been consistently strong. We are slightly below where we were this time last year but significantly better than average, which is really positive. All the data is then broken down into more detail to study which I can share. Our persistent absence is currently 9.8%, the national average is 22.6%, so we are well below that point. Variations of year groups are expected to some extent but we understand the reasons behind this with the individual needs we have in school.</p> <p>SM – What is FFT?</p> <p>PRC – Fisher Family Trust, is for secondary schools, it's a national data set with basically every child in the country in and every child in the country for the last 20 odd years now. So they have all their results and they model and map children against their academic profiles.</p>

DSM - I think the important context there is about 80-90% of schools pay into this. So the FFT National will have a slight difference to the actual national numbers that the government publish, where it's 100% of schools, but it's as near as accurate.

2. Suspension Data – *the number of students were shared for each half-term to date alongside the number of sessions (days/half-days) and visible dfe categories (reasons for the suspension).*

PRC – Statistically our suspensions remain very low.

DSM – Note, a child can be suspended for up to three reasons/categories per suspension.

Managed moves were also explained and discussed.

3. Attainment Data – *GCSE and A-Level expected summer grades (based on mock exams and how they are working in lesson) were shared alongside summer 2025 values as a comparison. Pupil premium and SEND student data was also shared.*

DSM – This year's cohort and last year's cohort didn't do SATS because of COVID, therefore there are no nationally agreed expected grades, so we will not get a progress score this year. So the best comparator that we can realistically use is the attainment scores that we had last year, as we looked at attainment in relation to the year before. Next academic year, we'll have progress scores again, though they will look slightly different.

OPJ – Obviously, with the announcement of the change to study leave for both year 11 and sixth formers, to what context or to what amount is this/ these predictions playing into that change? Are you using this to make decisions about changes to what we're doing/providing? What's the rationale or is there a data rationale behind the changes?

DSM – So sixth form, they're going to be in for an extra week, but they're going to have study leave from the day of their first exam. They ended up going so early because we were then trying to do too much to facilitate all the last days and the middle leaders training etc. so there's a bit of a rebalance.

Just to bring governors up to speed, year 11, rather than leaving early May, we have now said they're going through till the start of May half-term before they go on study leave. The government has had an increased focus on attendance, which has been well documented in the press and in their publications. They count year 11 attendance up to May half-term in terms of their calculations for the school's attendance. The reason that the majority of our year 11s become persistent absentees by the end of the year is because of letting them go on early study leave.

I am gradually coming under increased pressure to justify that. I think there is broad agreement that while our children perform well, that they could do better. The children that could/ have the potential to do better the most are the ones that need more structure. Those who are already good at organising structure will probably be okay being in school rather than being at home. Helps most and harms none is kind of where it comes from and the masterclass plan that PRC has developed and is almost ready to share with students. We went through it with a fine-toothcomb last night at SLT, and picked out a couple of anomalies/issues and things that just need tidying up. This is going to give them more structured and targeted support ahead of big exams, but also provide more structure for when they have private study as well. That's it in a nutshell. There is a positive reason for change, but the more I ponder it, the more I think it's better for an increasing minority and there is a larger majority that need more structure to their revision.

OPJ – What has made you change your mind? Previously you said you would defend the persistent absence because you believed study leave was the best thing for our students. You also asked middle leaders their thoughts and then two weeks later removed study leave.

DSM – As a result of that meeting, masterclasses did come from subject leaders and this is the route we are going down. This may not have been communicated clearly.

OPJ – We said we are always available at all times when we are timetabled to be so, regardless of whether or not students come in or not. Nobody said/talked about the concept of master classes.

DSM – It might not have been brought up in the meeting, but it was certainly brought up in the one of the line management meetings that I had afterwards as a suggested halfway house to allow for some independent study and for some structured revision. I appreciate all of those things. I did say this in governors a year ago and at the time that was something I believed in. The more I look at it granularly and the more I look at those children in the middle in particular and the children at the bottom end, do they need more structure and support? I find study leave increasingly difficult to justify. At the moment it is abstract to students so I need a really clear plan to go to them. I also want PRC to share a plan with staff before the end of the week.

OPJ - A lot of staff that would have been very receptive to that message. I think there's a lot of staff that would have thought you're right, we probably could do a little bit more for the children that are in the middle. But I also think this was posed as a question to staff. This was brought up as a what do we think about study leave? The answer was a resounding we think it's a net positive. We constantly talk about the quality of the staff that we have at this school and the amount of experience they've got. There have been a number of things now where we are immediately

within two years going back on things that we've done. For example, we asked should we be doing more GCSEs? Staff said no and we went up to 11 GCSEs and within two years we've gone, actually, this hasn't really worked and maybe we need to go back down again. We changed to teaching PD on a staff-by-staff basis rather than by specialists. Again, within two years, we've gone, actually, this maybe isn't the best way to do this. I know there's always reasons around why we made the decisions and why things were put in place, but for both of those things, you asked staff what they thought. Staff told you what they thought, and you didn't listen to what they said, and I get that there's reasons behind it, but it's complicated.

DSM – I didn't ask staff what they thought about 11 GCSEs, staff just didn't like the change.

OPJ – I apologise.

DSM – The PD Issue is iterative. The old model did not work. It was not effective. Ofsted highlighted it as not being effective. We changed to another model which gave more consistent PD delivery through year nine where there was very limited provision and 10 and 11 where previously there were drop down days - maybe there were drop down days in nine as well. So that has improved the quality of PD, but it is not where we would like it to be still. There are still spaces to make it better. The changes at Key Stage 4 around global studies that have opened up the possibility and the discussion of a five-year programme with specialist teachers delivering it through and also being direct, the vision of the new head of RE that allows for the scope to actually consider how we look at this in the round of a coherent curriculum that doesn't just look at facing quite a siloed approach and one that is tied into a wider understanding of the world that is allowing for the change. But at each stage it's iterative.

So I take the point and I take that perception wise it may be a view, but at each stage we are looking to improve on what's gone before and it's not a flip-flopping I don't think as it's being presented. It is in each case doing it slightly differently to move things forward.

When I was appointed, I had lots of plans for change and said to staff that I won't get everything right. I did say my job is to get 90-95% of things right and then stick with the things that work and review the things that don't. I'm happy to own that. I think we have still made some really positive decisions and moved a lot of things forward. They've not always been popular. They've not always been easy. There are things that I will always go back and look at again.

OPJ - I don't think people are thinking you're out to make things worse. I certainly don't think that but every time when there's these things, I always think there is a way to bring staff along with you and I really think at the minute we are struggling to do that. Part of it is the way that change is presented and brought in. It just seems that multiple times now when changes have been made,

	<p>regardless of whether staff like them or don't like them, there are ways to deliver information. So I agree, you didn't ask a question about the 11 GCSEs but the word consultation was used.</p> <p>DSM – Around whether to have a five or six-period day.</p> <p>OPJ – There is a way you, SLT, governors can communicate to bring staff along with us, it is very challenging.</p> <p>DSM – It is human nature to always focus on the things that they find infuriating and frustrating and when things haven't been done as well as they might have been. Then when things become, slightly more positive, it's, oh yeah, we quite like that and it's kind of forgotten because life is easier. So we're talking tonight about taking away the Friday that is busier and six period days and going back to it being the same structure day as the other days of the week - all those things that make a big difference. That will all be forgotten about by the second week in September as it will hopefully be a positive change/impact on staff. I take your point about comms. I think staff appreciate there are things also going on at the moment which are out of my hands, but this can hopefully generate buy-in if things are done in the right way so I take this point too.</p> <p>OPJ – Some things don't need to be a consultation; it could come to governors and then explain the rationale can be explained to staff on why you want to do things.</p> <p>MR – Thank you both, we have listened to both sides now. The challenge of leadership as you have said before.</p>
<p>8. LGB training – Ofsted Renewed Framework</p>	<p>DSM – Lets Park for the next face to face meeting please as I have slides to share about the new Ofsted framework. We come in the window in January 27.</p>
<p>9. Chair's Advisory Meeting – feedback</p>	<p>MR - As I've said before, we've had no meeting. I have one next Tuesday, which I think I know what the core discussion is going to be about.</p> <p>SM – Please can you provide feedback to us after the meeting, that would be really useful.</p> <p>MR – Yes, will do.</p>
<p>10. Ratify actions taken since the last meeting</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>11. Note – correspondence to The Chair</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>12. Confirm – actions/information from this meeting</p>	<p>MR - I will be writing a letter and attending this meeting. Other than that, I think we need clarity on your ECT policy regarding the governor's or trustees.</p>
<p>13. Dates a. Next LGB meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20th May – In person at QEGS, 12.30pm 	<p>MR – The next meeting is 20th May at QEGS.</p> <p>DSM – When is the Chair's Advisory meeting?</p> <p>MR – 24th March.</p>

- 1st July – Teams meeting, time tbc

PRC – Who is chairing it?

MR – I think David Davidson but the invite came from someone in the office. He chaired the last one.

DSM – Can we have a brief 20/30 minute catch up/update meeting next week?

All agreed.

MR – A 6pm teams call on Tuesday would be good?

DSM - I will send an invite out and we can go from there. Thank you everyone for your time.